Unit 2: Narrative Writing: Realistic Fiction (Weeks 7-13)

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **7 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit 2: Narrative Writing (Realistic Fiction)

Unit Rationale

Fiction writing is an essential skill students must learn for school and beyond. The art of storytelling is vital in many walks of life and professions such as sales and marketing. Additionally, being able to create and tell a story is an important part of some nonfiction writing, too. This unit comes at this point in the year for two reasons. First, students like to write about their experiences and this, in turn, helps in relationship building between students, their peers and teachers. Second, students are able to develop better stories after learning how to structure paragraphs, which is a key component of unit 1. Additionally, they will work toward mastering use of time, order and sequence transitions introduced via summary writing in unit 1.

Essential Questions

- How do writers develop ideas for fictional stories?

- How do I take something in my life and make it fictional?

- How do writers create and build a story around a theme?

- How can I make my narratives interesting to readers?

- What strategies can I use to make my writing the best it can be?

Pre-Assessments

Pre-assessment: Students will complete two forms of a pre-assessment. First they will complete a Google Form to determine what students already know about narrative elements. In addition, they will receive a prompt asking them to read the story "The White Umbrella" by Gish Jen and write a continuation after paragraph 131. The data collected will drive where we go next. We will be able to determine which narrative elements students already know. In addition, we can determine which of those elements and craft moves students use in their writing and whether or not they have mastered them.

Instructional Plan

Unit Instruction: We will start by gathering ideas for narratives following suggestions from Teachers College's Writing Workshop Curriculum. Among the ideas we will look to are a writer's own life, people that matter to them, moments and places that matter to them and times they learned an important lesson in life. They will then write long about one idea from the lists. This allows students to collect ideas and, later, choose one to use as the basis for a story.

After gathering, synthesizing and analyzing data from the pre-assessments, we will address areas in which skills need work. We will start by analyzing mentor texts for setting, plot, characters, conflict and theme. Mini lessons will accompany each area. As we break down texts for these areas, students will brainstorm and plan those elements for their story.

Students will draft using a class developed checklist (that should touch on the areas included in the checklists linked in this unit. Any linked checklists will be updated based on what students develop). Then we will focus on drafting and peer reviewing. In addition, we will focus on transitions to show order and sequence, strong action verbs, descriptive words, and figurative language.

All lessons can take several days to complete.

Lesson 1: Theme

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT analyze how authors develop a theme or central idea over the course of a text

WALT brainstorm narrative ideas and themes using real or imagined experiences or events

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...analyze a text for theme.

I can...identify the theme of a text.

I can...connect theme to life lessons.

I can...compare narrative themes to my own real experiences.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Analyze sample text and look for the Aha Moment. Analyze how plot, characters and dialogue developed the theme.
- Brainstorm and write about times we learned a lesson in life, people who matter to us, and places that matter to us.

Formative Assessments

- EdPuzzle video responses

- Completion of Aha Moment organizer

- Lists and writings regarding times students learned a lesson in life, people that matter to us, and places that matter to us.

Instructional Materials and Resources

- View screencast via EdPuzzle regarding theme and plot.
- View screencast regarding Aha Moment!
- Read "Tweet" from TeenInk.com and complete an organizer/guided questions.
- Show students clips of how authors develop ideas for stories. (John Green/The Fault in Our Stars and Adam Goldberg/The Goldbergs).
- List people and places that matter to students. List small moment memories about those people and places. Then write for a half hour and show the stories.
  - Share writing with classmates.
- List times in life students learned a lesson. Write a story showing one of the events.
  - Share writing with classmates.
- List stories students wish existed. Choose one and write the story.
  - Share writing with classmates.
- Complete Realistic Fiction Planning Sheet

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Aha Moment helped students ensure a theme was clear to readers. Most students had a theme in original drafts, meaning the concept got through. Most also put an aha moment/theme in the Unit 2 Benchmark.

ELA.RL.CI.7.2	Determine a theme in a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
ELA.W.NW.7.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Lesson 2: Point of View

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view in narrative writing.

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...identify the point of view in a story.

I can...describe an author's purpose for point of view.

I can...establish point of view in my own writing.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Analyze a sample opening to determine how point of view is established.

Formative Assessments

- [Introduction analysi](Introduction analysis)s and Creation of a checklist for writing expositions/ introductions

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Analyze the first page of "Seventh Grade" by Gary Soto.
- Complete an organizer to pick out parts of the exposition including establishment of context and point of view.
- Share findings

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

The organizer and mento texts worked to provide students with an opening structure. Add in a mini lesson on "Indefinite it." I did that this year and few, if any, students started stories with "It was a windy day…" In the past, students tended to start with "it."

| ELA.W.NW.7.3.A | Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. |

Lesson 3: Characters & Expositions

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT introduce a narrator and/or characters in narrative writing.

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...develop a character.

I can...deeply introduce a character in an exposition.

I can...write a clear exposition to introduce my story.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Review characterization and character development.
- Analyze Exposition of a narrative and develop a checklist.

Formative Assessments

- Completion of a [character organizer based on a chara](#)cter's name
- Characteriza[tion organizer and writing a scene using the character (taking the character on a test drive).](#)
- [Introduction analysi](#)s and Creation of a checklist for writing expositions/ introductions

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Analyze character traits students would expect for someone named "Waldo Willersby."
- Students will then receive a card with a name on it [and complete an organizer](#). Discuss and compare ideas.
- View EdPuzzle [video on](#) Direct vs. Indirect Characterization.
- Choose a character from the planning sheet. [Students will complete the STEAL Wheel and the take the character on a test drive](#) by placing the character into a scene.
- Analyze the [first page of "Seventh Grade" by Gary Soto.](#)
- Complete an organizer to pick out parts of the exposition.
    - Share findings
- Students will then develop a class checklist to write a clear exposition / introduction.

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Consider requiring students to change names and develop unique names. They love this lesson, but want to use the names of their friends/family included in the stories.

Lesson 4: Narrative Techniques

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT use narrative techniques (such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection) to develop experiences, events, and/or characters in narrative writing.

WALT use precise words, descriptive details, and phrases to capture the action and communicate experiences and events.

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...embed meaningful dialogue.

I can...properly embed dialogue.

I can...develop my story with great description.

I can...develop a plot.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Review narrative elements (Character, plot, setting, theme, conflict).
- Analyze a mentor text to determine how the five intermix.
- Brainstorm the story itself.
- Analyze sample dialogue to determine what readers can learn.
- Review parts of speech including nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs so students can use them intentionally in their writing.

Formative Assessments

- Google Form results
- Story analysis and discussion.
- Completion of planning organizer.
- Completion of dialogue analysis organizer.
- Discussion
- Creation of meaningful dialogue in story drafts.

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Complete Google Form entrance slip to see what students know about narrative elements.
- All view: Flocabulary video about "Five Things of Narratives" (Alternate Loom link
- Discuss five elements.
- Analyze setting of "Tweet." by circling and underlining words that created the mood/setting.
- Complete Realistic Fiction Planning Sheet
- Read teacher-selected text and complete the guided questions.
- Discuss findings with partners
- Share findings as a class and focus on what we learn about plot just from dialogue.
- Create a t-chart to define what meaningful dialogue is and what it is not.
- Play a brief game of "I Spy" and have students describe an item in the room using adjectives.
- Students continue drafting their own narratives and highlight/bold a specific number of adjectives and adverbs while drafting during the lesson.

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Add in an exercise having students write dialogue. Maybe use the comic strip lesson from back in the day. Students need help formatting dialogue.
http://hannerww.weebly.com/uploads/3/1/2/1/31214061/dialogue_cheat_sheet.pdf Also a lesson on verbs in place of said. Maybe show a clip and have students describe how the characters speak. (Yeled, bellowed, whispered, cried, etc.) https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/docs/handouts/Synonyms%20for%20Said.pdf

ELA.W.NW.7.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
ELA.W.NW.7.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

Lesson 5: Transitions & Sequence

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT use transition words, phrases, and clauses to let readers know the sequence of events or signal shifts in narrative writing.

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...identify appropriate transitions for narrative text.

I can...use transitions to sequence my story.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Brainstorm transitions to show a change in time or sequence.

Formative Assessments

- Lists of time/sequence transition words.
- Time/sequence transitions used in drafts

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Write directions to do something such as make a sandwich.
- Students will circle and share transition words used.
- Brainstorm transitions to show a change in time/order/sequence.
- Compile a class list of transitions to show time/order/sequence.
- Draft stories and focus on adding transitions to move readers to the next idea, scene, or event.

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.W.NW.7.3.C	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

Lesson 6: Conclusion

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT create a conclusion that follows from the narrative experiences or events.

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...develop an ending to a story.

I can...culminate the main events of my story.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Analyze sample conclusions with "Aha Moments" that show theme.
- Develop a checklist for drafting conclusions of stories.

Formative Assessments

- Screencast response regarding "Aha Moments".
- Analysis of sample short, small moment story conclusions
- Narrative drafts that include a clear "Aha Moment."

Instructional Materials and Resources

- [Screencast about the "Aha Moment](#)" in narratives.
- Read sample short story, small moment story conclusions and have students identify the "Aha Moment" and explain where it appears in the plot (falling action or resolution) Texts may come from TeenInk.com or past student exemplars.
- Develop a checklist for developing the ending.
- Draft ending/conclusion of narratives to include an "Aha Moment."

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.W.NW.7.3.E   Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Lesson 7: Revisions & Publishing

Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to … (WALT)

WALT use feedback from peers and adults help strengthen and develop writing.

WALT demonstrate command of formal English speech when indicated or appropriate.

WALT different types of sentences (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences) have different roles in writing

WALT choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely

Student Success Criteria … "I can statements"

I can...accept feedback and make appropriate changes to my writing.

I can...provide meaningful feedback to my peers.

I can...use proper grammar when publishing a piece of writing.

I can...differentiate my sentence structure to improve the quality of my writing.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Review rhetorical situation - purpose, audience, context and genre.
- What is the difference between editing and feedback? What are global vs. local revisions?
- Discuss story ideas, writing and provide feedback with partners, in groups and as a class.
- Review formal vs. informal speech and purpose, audience and context (Rhetorical situation)
- Use Grammar 101 or No Red Ink to work on sentence variety

Formative Assessments

- Develop a narrative that appeals to the audience and achieves the desired purpose.
- Completion of Two Stars and a Wish organizers during peer review.
- Observation during discussions
- Identify sentence types in a passage and see what students know as the lesson begins.
- Narrative drafts using a variety of sentence types. Student will color code sentences based on type.

Instructional Materials and Resources

- Brief screencast on Rhetorical situation/Keys to Communication
- Analyze sample prompts and determine Purpose, audience and context/task.
- Peer review and complete Two Stars and a Wish
- Students share what they think "formal" and "informal" speech are.
- Discuss and list times to be formal and when informal speech may be accepted. Focus on purpose, audience and context of communication.
- Establish class norms for when to use formal and when students may elect to use informal language.
- Entrance slip: students read a passage with a variety of sentence structures. Students explain how well the passage flows and why.
- Students attempt to identify different sentence types.
- Use data from above to drive the lesson forward focusing on sentence types as needed. Use screencasts and online resources such as Grammar 101 and No Red Ink.

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

This needs to be a larger focus. Need to find a sample with short/long sentences used for effect.

ELA.L.SS.7.1   Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.

ELA.L.KL.7.2	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
ELA.W.WP.7.4	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices and sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; and focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
ELA.W.RW.7.7	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Modifications and/or Accommodations

Suggested Modifications (ELL, Sp. Ed, GIfted, At-risk of Failure)

English Language Learners

Native language support: The teacher provides auditory or written content to students in their native language.

Adjusted Speech: The teacher changes speech patterns to increase student comprehension. This could include facing the students, paraphrasing, clearly indicating the most important ideas, and speaking more slowly.

Visuals: The teacher uses graphics, pictures, visuals, and manipulatives. This helps ELL students better understand and comprehend the subjects at hand.

Front-Loading Vocabulary: The teacher front loads vocabulary. This means providing students with a list of important vocabulary words they will need to know for a book, lesson, etc. prior to the lesson being taught. Including pictures to go with the vocabulary words is also very beneficial for the students.

Special Education Students

Chunking: The teacher presents information in a way that makes it easy for students to understand and remember. Chunking is based on the presumption that our working memory is easily overloaded by excessive detail. The best way to deliver information is to organize it into meaningful units. Because students with special needs get overloaded easily, chunking is an effective strategy to use with them.

Checking for Understanding: It is important to constantly check for understanding, especially for students who have accommodations. Teachers want to make sure students understand the concepts being covered in a way that makes sense to them.

Extra time: The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

Oral Reading: The teacher will read work orally to students. Class work such as tests and literature circles may need to be read aloud to the student.

Timers: The teacher will use timers as an instructional tool. The use of timers is beneficial for students who have trouble completing tasks. Timers can be helpful so the student is aware of how much time they have to complete an assignment.

Students with 504 Plans

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Gifted & Talented Strategies

Extensions/Enrichments: Teachers will provide gifted and talented students with extension/enrichment projects. Students will be challenged to further their understanding, to apply acquired knowledge, and/or to produce something in reference to acquired knowledge.

Modify/Change Activities: Teachers will monitor and modify activities to accommodate those students who need to be challenged further. Additional reading, problem-solving, writing, or project work is necessary for those students who are ready to move on at a rate more accelerated than their peers. In this way, G & T students are provided the same opportunity for support as special needs students.

Students at Risk of School Failure

Directions or Instructions: Make sure directions and/or instructions are given in limited numbers. Give directions/instructions verbally and in simple written format. Ask students to repeat the instructions or directions to ensure understanding occurs. Check back with the student to ensure he/she hasn't forgotten.

Peer Support: Peers can help build confidence in other students by assisting in peer learning. Many teachers use the 'ask 3 before me' approach. This is fine, however, a student at risk may have to have a specific student or two to ask. Set this up for the student so he/she knows who to ask for clarification before going to you.

Alternate or Modified Assignments: Always ask yourself, "How can I modify this assignment to ensure the students at risk are able to complete it?" Sometimes you'll simplify the task, reduce the

length of the assignment or allow for a different mode of delivery. For instance, many students may hand something in, the at-risk student may jot notes and give you the information verbally. Or, it just may be that you will need to assign an alternate assignment.

Increase One to One Time: When other students are working, always touch base with your students at risk and find out if they're on track or needing some additional support. A few minutes here and there will go a long way to intervene as the need presents itself.

Contracts: It helps to have a working contract between you and your students at risk. This helps prioritize the tasks that need to be done and ensure completion happens. Each day write down what needs to be completed, as the tasks are done, provide a checkmark or happy face. The goal of using contracts is to eventually have the student come to you for completion sign-offs.

Hands On: As much as possible, think in concrete terms and provide hands-on tasks. This means a child doing math may require a calculator or counters. The child may need to tape record comprehension activities instead of writing them. A child may have to listen to a story being read instead of reading it him/herself.

Tests/Assessments: Tests can be done orally if need be. Break tests down in smaller increments by having a portion of the test in the morning, another portion after lunch and the final part the next day.

Seating: Seat students near a helping peer or with quick access to the teacher. Those with hearing or sight issues need to be close to the instruction which often means near the front.

Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Climate Change, Informational and Media Literacy

See crosswalks.

Students will have the ability to share their own personal experiences with DEI while brainstorming story ideas.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uf0fWDvpqWFOAb51rOq7mN5xq-xu-M5Yp2FbEVZ9Kt8/edit?gid=0#gid=0

New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Content Area

ELA.L.SS.7.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
ELA.L.KL.7.2	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
ELA.RL.CI.7.2	Determine a theme in a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is

	conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
ELA.W.NW.7.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
ELA.W.NW.7.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
ELA.W.NW.7.3.C	Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
ELA.W.NW.7.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
ELA.W.NW.7.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
ELA.W.WP.7.4	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices and sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; and focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
ELA.W.RW.7.7	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
ELA.SL.PE.7.1.C	Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
ELA.SL.PE.7.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.
ELA.SL.II.7.2	Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills

TECH.8.1.8.A.3	Use and/or develop a simulation that provides an environment to solve a real world problem or theory.
TECH.8.1.8.A.4	Graph and calculate data within a spreadsheet and present a summary of the results.
TECH.8.1.8.B.CS2	Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
TECH.9.4.8.CT.2	Develop multiple solutions to a problem and evaluate short- and long-term effects to determine the most plausible option (e.g., MS-ETS1-4, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.1).

Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking

CS.6-8.8.2.8.ITH.1	Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.

Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLS for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math

See Crosswalks.

The reading and writing skills taught throughout this unit will provide knowledge, practice, and support in all content areas where reading and writing are required.

ELA.RL.CI.7.2	Determine a theme in a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
SOC.6.3.8.CivicsPD.1	Deliberate on a public issue affecting an upcoming election, consider opposing arguments, and develop a reasoned conclusion.
SOC.6.3.8.CivicsPD.2	Propose and defend a position regarding a public policy issue at the appropriate local, state, or national level.
	Relationships can be classified as causal or correlational, and correlation does not necessarily imply causation.

21st Century Life and Career

| CRP.K-12.CRP4.1 | Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome. |

SEL Competencies and Standards

SEL.PK-12.3.1	Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of others
SEL.PK-12.3.3	Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ
SEL.PK-12.5.2	Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others